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(19) OT-RD-660312

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

APR 26 1968

## Lessons Learned

~~HEADQUARTERS 5D HOWITZER BATTALION 6TH ARTILLERY~~  
APO 96295

**AVFA-AT-3/6-CO**

1 Nov [redacted] 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for quarterly period ending 31 Oct 1966.

TO: Sea Distribution

**DECLARATION OF THE VOTES**

**SECTION I (U) SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATION OR UNIT ACTIVITIES**

1. (U) General:

a. The remainder of the battalion's general cargo which included several wheeled vehicles, 18 howitzers, 105mm SP, M108; and 7 Armored Personnel Carriers, M113, arrived at base camp (Artillery Hill) on 3 August.

b. During the reporting period, the battalion continued its program of building and improving base camp. Buildings that were completed by the use of troop labor included 14 enlisted troop billets, 4 officer billets, 3 unit mess halls, and 4 battery headquarters buildings.

c. Awards: The Bronze Star Medal for valor was awarded to the Battalion Surgeon, Medical NCO, and Medical Aidman in a battalion ceremony on 8 October. The Air Medal was awarded to the Assistant S2 during the reporting period.

2. (U) Intelligence: Several members of Forward Observer parties were committed to aerial visual reconnaissance (VR) missions which resulted in sightings of intrenchments, numerous hamlets, bridges, trails, and suspected enemy personnel. Several locations of these sightings have been used as H&I targets by artillery units in the Pleiku area.

### **3. (U) Operations and Training Activities:**

a. Plans: Planned emphasis within the battalion was to develop and maintain individual combat proficiency, safety, personal hygiene and sanitation, maintenance, and security by periodically scheduling formal classes. Much of this training has been stressed through on-the-job training techniques. Familiarization firing of all individual and crew serve weapons is conducted each calendar quarter.

b. Operations Defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Laws, Title 18, U. S. C., Section 793 and 794. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law."

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AVFA-AT..3/6.00

1 November 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1966

(1) At 1840 hours on 3 August, the battalion fired a TOW, its first mission and first round in the Republic of South Vietnam with unknown results. The targets were an enemy assembly area and suspected enemy CP.

(2) Calibration firing (6 rounds per tube) of the 105mm Howitzers (M108) SP was completed on 5 August.

(3) On 9 August, Battery A moved to the vicinity of Catecka with the mission GSR 2d Howitzer Battalion, 9th Artillery in support of 1st Battalion, 69th Armor, 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division on "OPERATION PAUL REVERE II" an operation which lasted 15 days.

(4) On 11 August, Battery B moved to the vicinity of Plei Boy on a one day operation to provide defensive fires for CIDG operations in the Plei Mrong area.

(5) From 13-15 August, Battery C moved to the vicinity of Plei Mrong and provided fires for a CIDG clearing operation which resulted in the destruction of one building in a suspected Viet Cong location. The operation resulted in several VC surrendering to the CIDG.

(6) On 23 August, Battery C occupied a position 15 miles east of Pleiku City south of Highway 19 on a one day operation firing preparation and defensive fires in support of two ARVN companies in an operation to clear and occupy Hill 928 (BR 073429). One Viet Cong suspect was captured during this operation.

(7) From 23 August until 7 September, Battery B moved to a position between Catecka and Plei Me with a mission GSR 2d Howitzer Battalion, 17th Artillery in an operation supporting two ARVN battalions (Task Forces) in a clearing operation from west of Plei Me NE to an area SW of Catecka in the Ia Drang and Ia Puch River Valleys.

(8) From 24 August until 31 October, Battery C has been deployed from 8 to 25 miles along Highway 19 east of Pleiku City GSR 2d Howitzer Battalion, 9th Artillery and DS 1/10 Cavalry with a mission to provide cover and security of Highway 19 in the Pleiku sector.

(9) From 24 August until 13 October, Battery A occupied several positions in the vicinity of Duc Co with a mission GSR 2d Howitzer Battalion, 9th Artillery on "OPERATION PAUL REVERE III". Defensive, preparation, registration, and H&I missions were fired during this period. On 4 October, Battery A fired its 10,000th round in the Republic of South Vietnam.

(10) During the period 12-22 September, Battery B occupied a position approximately 12 miles west of Pleiku City along Route 509 with the mission GSR 2d Howitzer Battalion, 9th Artillery.

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1 November 1966

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(11) From 22-30 September, Battery B occupied a position in the vicinity of Thanh Binh (Oasis) with the mission GSR 2d Howitzer Battalion, 9th Artillery.

(12) During the period 1-22 October, Battery B moved and occupied positions north of Phu Cat along Highway 1 in GS of 22nd ARVN Division on "OPERATION IRVING" in the Phu Cat Mountains north of Qui Nhon. The battery was credited with 65 enemy KIA and 8 VC captured during this operation.

(13) During the period 13-27 October, Battery A occupied positions in the vicinity of Plei Djereng with the mission GSR 2d Howitzer Battalion, 9th Artillery in support of 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division and USSF/CIDG elements on "OPERATION PAUL REVERE IV". During this operation, Battery A was credited with a total of 15 NVA/VC KIA.

(14) On 22 October, Battery B deployed two platoons along Highway 19 east of Pleiku City with the mission DS 1/10 Cavalry in providing cover and security of Highway 19.

(15) Effective 1600 hours 23 October, 3d Howitzer Battalion, 6th Artillery (-) became OPCON of the 4th Infantry Division with Battery A occupying a position in vicinity of Plei Djereng with a mission GSR 2d Howitzer Battalion, 9th Artillery on "OPERATION PAUL REVERE IV". Batteries B and C deployed in two platoons each, each east of Pleiku City along Highway 19 with a mission DS 1/10 Cavalry providing security of Highway 19.

(16) From 27-29 October, Battery A occupied a position within the 4th Infantry Division Base Camp as elements of a reaction force. During this period the battery fired three defensive concentrations before moving to the vicinity of Thanh Binh (Oasis) on 29 October.

(17) On 31 October, one platoon (2 howitzers) from Battery A moved to vicinity of Plei Me with a mission GS II Corps. The remaining elements of Battery A moved within the 4th Infantry Division Base Camp as elements of a reaction force.

c. Training: On 21 September and 3 October, Headquarters Battery's Mortar Section fired a total of 124 rounds of 82mm mortar HE in a joint training exercise with the 77th Radar (CMR) Detachment.

## SECTION II (C) COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Part I, Observations (Lessons Learned)

#### 1. (C) Operations:

a. Item: Firing Chart (Scale: 1/25,000) FDC

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AVFA-AT-3/6-CO

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1966

1 November 1966

Discussion: Unlike both the aluminum and paper firing charts (grid sheet), the plastic chart being resistant to water damage can be wiped off with a damp cloth to remove dirt and dust. This chart can be used several times before becoming unserviceable.

Observation: All fire direction centers should use the plastic firing charts while operating in RVN.

b. Item: Forward Observers (M-14 Rifle).

Discussion: The Forward Observer and his party must carry an excessive amount of 7.62mm ammunition on operations because of resupply problems. This is especially true when operating with troops who are usually armed with different type weapons. When operating with US infantry elements, the resupply of ammunition is only for the M-16 Rifle.

Observation: The Forward Observer and party should be issued the M-16 Rifle instead of the M-14 Rifle.

c. Item: Survey Control.

Discussion: Extensive use of surveyed firing data is hampered in most areas in RVN due to a lack of survey control points. Many times the battery must rely on map spotted coordinates, and laying the battery by compass.

Observation: Survey parties from TAB and other units should extend control in areas most likely to require artillery support, e.g., main highways, villages, and military installations. Trig lists should be consolidated and issued to units operating in the areas concerned.

d. Item: Lighting Set, General Illuminating.

Discussion: The firing batteries are frequently split into two platoons operating at distances from 5 to 15 miles apart. The TOW authorizes one lighting set, 25 outlet, 110-120 volts and one generator set 110-120 volts AC, per firing battery. In view of this, only one of the platoon has adequate lighting facilities essential for 24 hour operations.

Observation: All firing batteries in RVN should be issued two generator sets 110-120 volts AC or a lighting set which includes 30 watt bulbs that can be used with the 1.5 KW, 28 volt generator.

2. (C) Logistics:

a. Item: 105mm Howitzer (M108) SP.

Discussion: This unit has experienced considerable downtime as pertains to the M108 Howitzer. The downtime rate is due to the unavailability in RVN of ASL depot stockage of certain major components/parts, e.g., Modol 7399

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AVFA-AT-3/6-CO

November 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1966.

diesel engines, radiators, impellers, solid rubber tires for wood wheels, panoramic telescopes, and common usage gun parts, e.g., extractors, pivot pins, and plungers. There are presently five panoramic telescopes turned in to ordnance due to the loosening of bonding material which has allowed moisture to enter into the telescopes rendering them unserviceable. Due to the lack of adequate repair parts and facilities, the deadline rate and "downtime" of the M108 Howitzers is unnecessarily high. This unit was informed by higher headquarters that a pre-packaged PLL/ASL and a float howitzer should have been sent to RVN prior to our departure from CONUS. To date we have been unable to locate these items.

Observation: That all major components/parts for the M108 Howitzers, M108 SP be made available in RVN which will reduce the duration of "downtime" and enhance the unit's operational capability. A pre-packaged PLL/ASL and necessary float howitzers should be clearly assigned and interested units notified.

b. Item: Wheel Vehicles (Cargo).

Discussion: The following listed wheel vehicle parts are not available in RVN: Shafts for 5 ton Wrecker M543A2, starters for 5 ton Truck M544; and engines, transmissions, and bodies for  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton M151. When major parts for the  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton vehicle cannot be obtained from property disposal, the vehicle is evacuated and a requisition for a replacement has to be processed.

Observation: That adequate ASL depot stockage of wheel vehicle parts be made available in RVN to include items for direct exchange.

3. (C) Other:

a. Item: Aviation Section.

Discussion: This unit was originally authorized organic aircraft with a complete aviation section, which was deleted prior to deployment overseas. Since the nature of the operations in this area require that the batteries be separated extensively and on an almost continuing basis, it is necessary to use aircraft for command and control; and as a communications link. In addition to being widely dispersed in the area of operations, the majority of the land routes to the batteries are weather or enemy controlled making it necessary to communicate by use of aircraft. This is presently being done by "borrowing" aircraft from local aviation units or by "hitchhiking" when aircraft are available.

Observation: Aviation sections that are authorized by TCG or augmentation; should be issued to units presently in RVN, and to units that are deploying to RVN.

Part II, Recommendations

1. (U) Logistics:

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AVFA-AT-3/6-CO

1 November 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1966

a. Recommend that each M108 Howitzer battalion in RVN be issued eight additional panoramic telescopes as running spares. This will help the battalion to maintain full artillery fire power capability.

b. It is recommended that an adequate ASL depot stockage of major components/parts for track and wheel vehicles be made available in RVN.

2. (U) Other: Recommend that aviation sections authorized by TOE or augmentation be issued to units presently in RVN and units that are deploying to RVN.

  
WILLIAM K. FARMER  
LTC, Artillery  
Commanding

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AVFA-AT-52-CO (1 Nov 66) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period  
ending 31 October 1966

Headquarters, 52d Artillery Group, APO 96295 4 November 1966

TO: Commanding Officer, I FFORCEV Artillery, APO 96350

1. Forwarded herewith is the Operational Report, subject as above, for 3d Howitzer Battalion, 6th Artillery.
2. Concur in observations and recommendations contained in basic communications.

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as

*O. L. Tolaison*  
O. L. TOLIAISON  
Colonel Artillery  
Commanding

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MFPA-AT-D (1 Nov 66)

2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period  
Ending 31 October 1966, (3d Pn, 6th Arty) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, I FIELD FORCE VIETNAM ARTILLERY, APO 96350, 28 Nov 66

TO: Commanding General, I Field Force Vietnam, ATTN: MFPA-GC-0&T  
APO 96350

1. (U) Concur with recommendations contained in basic communication.

2. (U) Action is being initiated to prepare and submit recommended changes to TDE 6-3172 and TOE 6-4672 which will include the following:

a. 16 rifles for forward observers and their parties.

b. Two generators, 110-120v, 60 cycle, AC 1.5 KW, per firing battery.

3. (U) Aviation support of non-divisional artillery units in I FFORCEV has been, and continues to be a serious problem. Separate correspondence will be submitted on this subject.

4. (U) The logistical problems cited in the basic report have been substantiated by this headquarters. Action was initiated and is continuously monitored to insure that unit PLLs and supporting ASLs are adequate and responsive to operational requirements. Considerable improvement has been noted in this area within the past thirty days.

5. (U) Recommendations:

a. That plastic grid sheets be standard issue items for field artillery units in tropical areas, (Plotting Sheets, Plastic Polyethylene, Terephthalate, 1000M grid, 1:25,000 scale, FSN 7530-656-0812).

b. That deploying units be issued and carry with them as General Cargo, pre-packaged PLL and ASL. Upon arrival, the ASL should be delivered to their Direct Support Maintenance unit. The support commands should take vigorous action to acquire adequate numbers of maintenance floats, e.g. howitzers, vehicles, radios and components such as sights, to back up equipment in the hands of using units.

*Ashley A. Blinn*  
ASHLEY A. BLINN  
Colonel, Artillery  
Commanding

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enclosure

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AVFA-GC-Q&T (1 Nov 66)

3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1966 (u)

Headquarters, I Field Force Vietnam, APO US Forces 96350 15 DEC 1966

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, APO US Forces 96307

(C) The 3d Battalion, 6th Artillery Operational Report of Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1966 is forwarded with the following comment:

Section II, Part I, Paragraph 2a (105mm Howitzer (M108) SP): US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon, advised this headquarters on 6 December 1966 that a "push" package for the M108, 105mm Howitzer had been located and was currently being inventoried. A recommendation has been made for retention of Authorized Stockage List/Prescribed Load List items at depot level until direct support units (supporting the 3d Battalion, 6th Artillery) have acquired an adequate artillery support capability.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*William H. James*  
WILLIAM H. JAMES  
Colonel, AGC  
Adjutant General

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AVHGC-DH (1 Nov 66)

4th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending  
31 October 1966 (RCS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96307  
G 8 JAN 1967

**TO:** Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 October 1966 from Headquarters, 3d Howitzer Battalion, 6th Artillery as indicated.

2. Pertinent comments are as follows:

a. Reference Paragraph 5a, 2d Indorsement: Concur on the use of plastic grid sheets by field artillery units assigned to tropical environments.

b. Reference Paragraph 5b, 2d Indorsement: Concur in recommendation for deployment of units with PLL and ASL and subsequent delivery of ASL to supporting maintenance unit. Current policy is for Support Commands to establish maintenance floats on major equipment items consistent with availability of equipment to establish such floats.

#### **FOR THE COMMANDER:**



R. J. THORNTON  
1st Lt, AGC  
Asst Adjutant General

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GPOP-OT (1 Nov 66)

5th Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending  
31 October 1966 (RCS CSFOR-65)

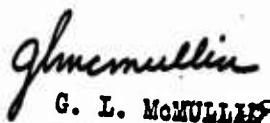
23 JAN 1967

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in the basic report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



G. L. McMULLIN  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

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